



November 2, 2022

Mr. Kyle Kling
Arlington County
Department of Environmental Services
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 710
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Crystal City to Reagan National Airport Multimodal Connection (CC2DCA) Project

Dear Mr. Kling,

I am writing on behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) and its more than 7,000 members across the Washington metropolitan area to express our support for Alternative 7D as the Preferred Alternative for the Crystal City to National Airport (CC2DCA) project.

For fifty years, WABA has worked to transform the capital region by improving the conditions for people who bike. Our work to advocate for dedicated bike infrastructure, pass laws that promote safe roadway behavior, and provide education programming for all road-users has resulted in a drastically different cultural and political approach to biking for transportation. Biking can and should be an equitable, safe, low-cost, time-saving, and sustainable way to navigate our cities for all residents.

By connecting Arlington's bus rapid transit, Metro rail, commuter rail (VRE/MARC), and intercity rail (Amtrak) facilities in Crystal City with Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) and the region's trail network via the Mount Vernon Trail, the CC2DCA project will enhance the overall value of our existing and interdependent transportation networks.

The project will create new mobility options such as connecting regional and long distance rail via Amtrak and VRE to DCA and is a necessary prerequisite to unlock the full mobility potential at this emerging air/rail nexus. The Recommended Preferred Alternative 7D is the best choice to ensure the project takes full advantage of this once-in-a-generation opportunity for three primary reasons.

First, Alternative 7D provides a superior connection to the planned passenger rail station in National Landing. Thanks to Virginia's "Transforming Rail in Virginia" Initiative, this station will provide frequent, bi-directional VRE and Amtrak service to destinations throughout the commonwealth and the entire Northeast Corridor. Efforts are also underway to extend MARC commuter rail service to National Landing. Alternative 7D connects directly to the heart of that planned station, providing convenient access for passengers, whereas Alternative 9D would connect to the far south end of the station, requiring passengers to walk further to reach VRE and MARC service.

Second, Alternative 7D provides a better connection to DCA, directly connecting users to Terminal 2 without the need for stairs or an elevator. It would have a smaller overall footprint within the parking facility, and be situated in a less disruptive location with better potential for future micromobility enhancements, such as bike lockers and storage. Alternative 9D is inferior for several reasons; it would have a longer overall route, increasing travel time for users, and would require users to travel a significant distance through the parking garage. Most importantly, 9D would connect to level L3 of the garage, requiring users to take the stairs or elevator to reach the airport.

Finally, Alternative 7D provides the best value for money. By connecting directly to National Landing Station, 7D will make use of the station's planned connection to Crystal Drive. By contrast, 9D requires constructing a duplicative connection over the railroad tracks to Crystal Drive, increasing the cost by \$21.5m. Alternative 7D not only saves significant money but also provides a better experience for users by reducing the distance they need to travel.

While we recognize the current phase does not directly address design, we want to highlight two design priorities for the next study phase. First, we want to ensure the bridge is designed with sufficient space for both convenient bike travel and a comfortable, inviting user experience. This could include benches, landscaping, scenic lookouts, and other amenities. The second priority is to ensure the connection to the Mount Vernon Trail is maximally accessible to all trail users, with sufficiently wide and properly graded ramps to facilitate convenient use by people with cargo bikes, kid carriers, and trailers.

So far we are encouraged by the overall design and commend Arlington County for reaching this important milestone in the federal approval process. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this important project and look forward to continuing to work with Arlington County to ensure CC2DCA moves forward as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Kevin O'Brien

Trails Coalition Coordinator | Washington Area Bicyclist Association